

79 00721

AN  
ARCHITECTURAL  
GUIDE  
TO  
REMODELING  
AND  
RESTORATION  
IN THE  
INNER  
RICHMOND  
DISTRICT

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL  
STUDIES LIBRARY

JAN 31 1978

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING © 1977



*San Francisco - Dwellings  
Dwellings - Maintenance and repair - Cal - San Francisco  
Housing rehabilitation - " - "  
Richmond district, San Francisco - Dwellings*

## Contents

The Buildings of the Inner Richmond	3
Architectural Highlights	4
Alterations to Buildings	5
Appendix of Architectural Styles	7

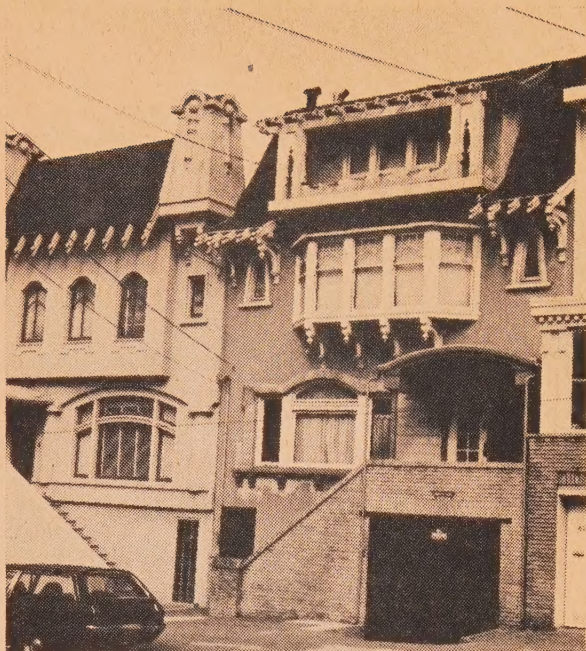


*This brochure was prepared to encourage the retention of worthwhile building facades and streetscapes in the Inner Richmond Conservation Area. Well over 100 buildings in the area have been identified by the Department of City Planning's 1976 Architectural Inventory as having notable architectural qualities. Additionally, many of these buildings contribute significant urban design characteristics. The most important of these are described on page 4. The section on alterations contains some thoughts on the most common problems of renovation. Finally, examples of various architectural styles are included to help explain the nature and importance of these buildings.*

*It is hoped that by making owners and residents more aware of the architectural quality of the buildings in the area, much of the character of the neighborhood can be respected and retained.*



# The Buildings of the Inner Richmond



This part of the Richmond is mostly flat but a few streets have gentle slopes. The area was developed around the turn of the century in a highly consistent manner, and it remains very much the same as when it was built. Near Geary Boulevard there are a few examples of earlier buildings, some from as early as the 1870's.

Most of the buildings are rowhouses of two or three stories, built across the full width of the lot, forming an unbroken wall along the street. Some facades are completely flat; some are enriched by shallow but wide bay windows. Whole streets are developed in the same way, so that some streets are composed exclusively of

flat-fronted buildings; others are exclusively bay windowed. A few blocks have houses with the gable ends facing the streets, but the most common building type is the flat roofed box. Within a very narrow spectrum, different building types combine together to create interesting architectural and urban design effects.

Architecture here is the sum of materials, embellishments, and projections applied to an unvarying box-like form. This stage set view of architecture is of great importance in understanding the visual qualities of the area.



Queen Anne rowhouses

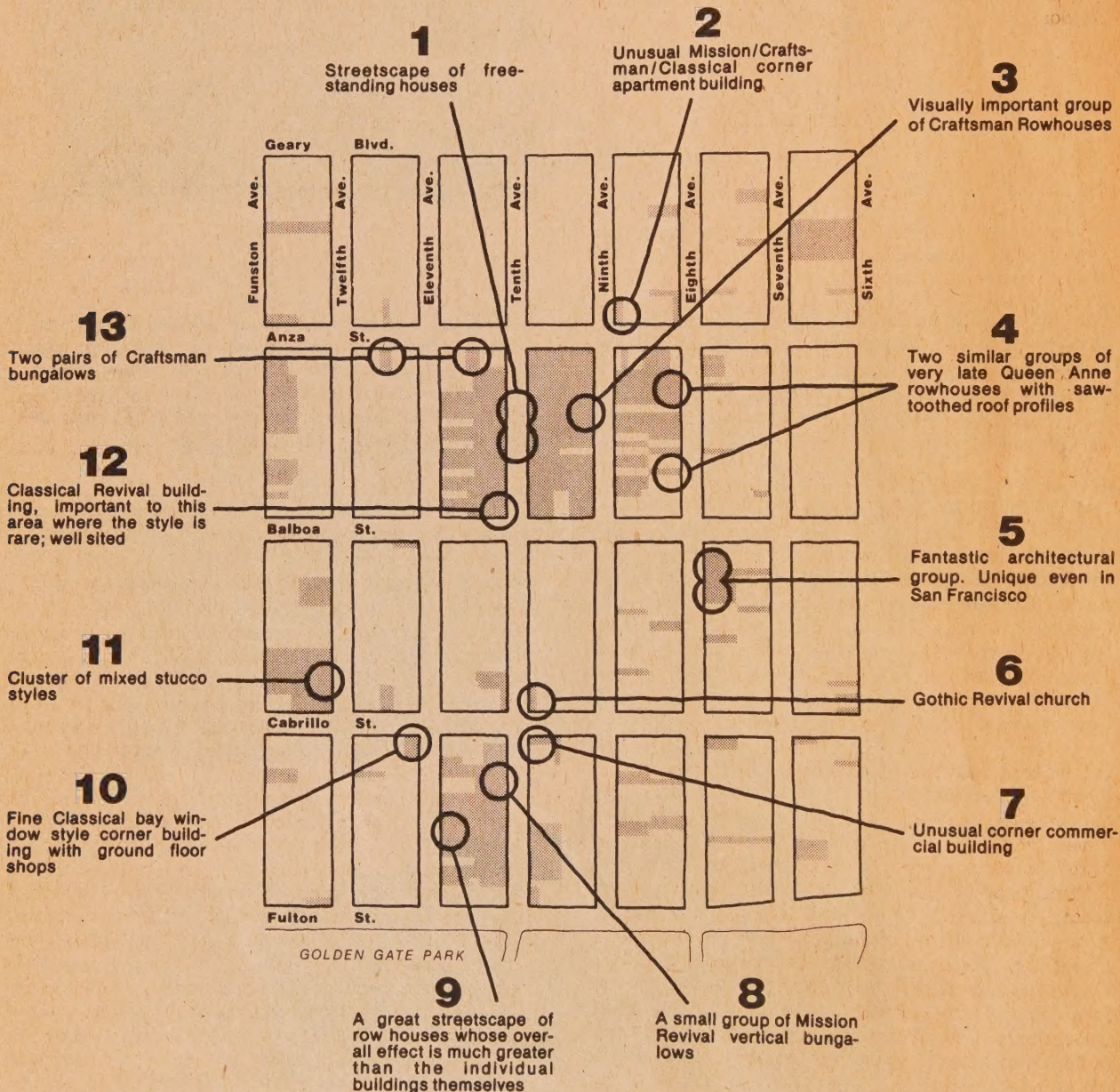


# Architectural Highlights

A major architectural grouping of buildings occurs on Tenth Avenue between Anza and Balboa, *Group #1*. Here, freestanding houses on oversized lots are set back behind lawns and trees on both sides of the street. The overall effect of this group is woodsy and shingled, although many of the buildings are actually stuccoed, with accents of tiles or other materials. Usually the stucco is relieved by projections in wood or molded plaster, and by deeply projecting roof eaves or exposed rafters, and by larger projections of the building volume

itself such as bay windows and balconies. The style elements of this group include Mission Revival, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and Secessionist motifs.

This block is a good place to see how effective street trees are in modifying one's perception of an area. Combined with some modest but well maintained shrubs and lawns, this area contrasts sharply with the stark feeling of many of the surrounding blocks.



The shaded lot areas in the diagram indicate the locations of buildings that are listed in the 1976 Architectural Inventory.



Another notable group is the series of row houses on the east side of Eighth Avenue near Cabrillo, *Group #5*. These examples employ stucco to imitate forms from Bungalow, Mission Revival, Secessionist, and Classical styles. Again, projecting stickwork beams are used to animate the facades.

There are several other significant groups in the area. On Ninth Avenue between Anza and Balboa, *Group #3* is a set of mild architectural experiments in urbanizing the suburban bungalow form. The bungalow was a low, spreading suburban house that was popular from about 1900 to the present, but the demands of narrow lots forced San Francisco builders to develop more vertical versions. Other fine streetscapes of this type include, Eighth Avenue between Anza and Balboa, *Group #5*, Tenth and Eleventh Avenues between Cabrillo and Fulton, *Groups #8 and #9*, and Twelfth Avenue between Balboa and Cabrillo, *Group #11*. Perhaps the single

most intriguing building in the Conservation Area is the highly disciplined yet architecturally voluptuous building at 490 Ninth Avenue, at Anza. The conventional form of bay-windowed Edwardian flats is transformed by the use of a Mission Revival parapet instead of the usual cornice, and by the substitution of shingles for smooth painted wood on the exterior walls. (*This building is discussed further in the section on combined styles.*)

It is possible that the Rehabilitation Assistance Program will cause some homeowners to consider remodelling projects that go beyond minimum code requirements. The following discussion is intended to raise the points most frequently encountered by the homeowner in making decisions that will affect the appearance of the facade of their building. Remodelling in general should enhance or respect the original architectural quality of any building.

## Alterations to Buildings

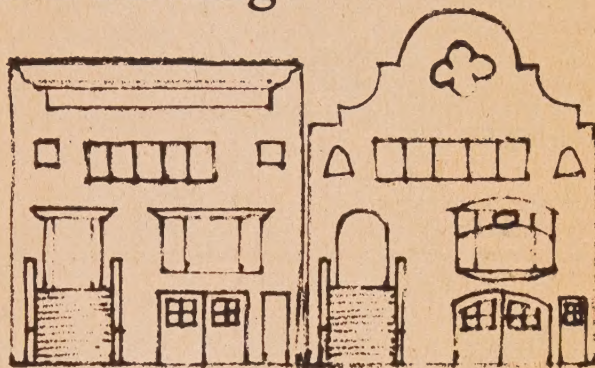
### SCALE

The most basic consideration in remodelling is the size of the proposed alteration in relation to the scale and rhythm of the streetscape. Notice the size of the elements like windows, doors, and ornamentation. The houses here are generally built with no space between them. Most of them are two rooms wide. This layout is typically reflected in the facade at the second floor by two bays, or a window and a bay; at the main floor by the entrance and a bay; and at the ground floor by a stair and the garage door.

### TEXTURE AND MATERIALS

The character of a whole block or group is derived from the repetition of these elements on the facades. Since most of these houses are essentially delightfully decorated boxes, their character is almost totally dependent on the *ins and outs* of the facade, such as the projecting eaves or bays, the porches, the entryway recesses, the sizes of openings, and the scale and distribution of trim and ornamentation.

It is difficult and visually awkward to introduce materials other than the wood, brick, stucco, and shingles used by the original builders. Asbestos shingles, aluminum siding, and vinyl siding have all been widely used to resurface old buildings. These materials are difficult to fit around projections such as window trim or other decorative elements. Because of this the installers of these products often prefer to remove some or all of the projections. The resulting appearance of the facade is usually radically different. The loss of horizontal shadow lines cast by trim elements, cornices, or siding often causes the re-surfaced facade to appear too tall and thin, and too flat. Aside from the fact that these materials do not fit aesthetically, they are very easily damaged by puncturing or denting, and once damaged cannot be easily repaired, and the use of such materials reduces the resale value of the property. The visual problems associated with the use of synthetic coverings also applies to the use of wood shingles when they are applied indiscriminately. Any time resurfacing is proposed the homeowner should make certain that the contractor will not remove the original trim that often gives the building its only character.



### GARAGE DOOR

Many homeowners will want to enlarge the opening to the garage or to replace doors which no longer operate properly. If it should be necessary to change the size or shape of the opening the visual effect of this change should be considered. A glance reveals that the garage door is often the largest single element in the facade of the house. One would expect that the largest element would be the most important or the most attractive. But this is not the case with garages. The designers of these houses chose to deal with the problem by keeping the opening as small as possible, by recessing the doors as much as space permits so that the doors are in shadow, by relating the form of the opening to forms that appear elsewhere on the facade, or by breaking up the surface of the door itself with small panels or small panes of glass. Any or all of these devices tend to reduce the apparent size of the opening and bring it more nearly into scale with the rest of the facade. For example, at 2026 Anza, and 835 Cabrillo, the arched lintel of the garage matches the one over the entrance. At 835 Cabrillo, where the original garage doors remain, the fine pattern produced by the small panes of glass visually breaks up the apparent size of the doors, allowing the composition of the facade above it to be seen more clearly. *See illustration page 11.*

Skilled woodworkers are able to duplicate the types of doors originally used on these garages, and through careful design, they could also adapt doors of this type to overhead operation. Dark or mute paint colors will further minimize the visual impact of the garage doors.



## WINDOWS

The mild but foggy San Francisco climate has always encouraged large glass areas. Windows are usually a very important design element. Builders at the turn of the century incorporated a great variety of window types into these houses. The buildings of the Inner Richmond include every imaginable type of window.

The commonest type is the traditional wood double-hung window. In this type the top sash is often divided into smaller panes, while the bottom sash contains a single pane of glass. There are also many windows in special shapes: ovals, lunettes (half-circles), casement windows with fixed transoms, or rectangular sash divided into special patterns. These quaint and varied window arrangements add greatly to the appeal of these buildings and are worthwhile retaining, though this may sometimes require a little extra effort.

Where the existing sash cannot be repaired it should be duplicated. The sash can be removed from the frame and sent to a shop that specializes in this work. These shops are listed in the yellow pages under **WINDOWS-WOOD**. They can duplicate the sash, sometimes within one day.

Many home-repair books describe the process of removing the sash and re-ropeing the counterweights. By doing some of this work themselves owners can substantially reduce the cost of repairs.

Ill-fitting, drafty windows can be made weathertight by adding weatherstripping. This is generally considered a job for the specialist. Even so, the cost will often be less than for complete replacement.

Storm windows are another excellent way to provide greater comfort during the cooler weather. The main objection to storm windows is their exterior appearance. This objection may be overcome by placing the storm sash inside the existing windows where the frames will be covered by curtains. As the price of fuel continues to increase we can expect to see more imaginative solutions to the architectural problems of energy conservation.

## PAINT COLORS

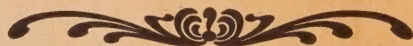
A new exterior paint scheme is usually the final step in the rehabilitation of an old house. While there are no absolute rules regulating paint colors, there are accepted conventional treatments for different styles of buildings.

- Rich colors are associated with buildings of the late Victorian era, *Stick-Style*, and *Queen Anne*.
- Styles that contain classical references, *Classic Revival*, *Colonial Revival*, *Italianate* were originally painted white or pastel tones, with very dark colors on the sash and doors.
- Shingled buildings *Shingle Style* and *Craftsman* are normally stained in browns or earth colors.
- Stucco, *Mission Revival* and *Secessionist* suggests muted pastels.

A successful color scheme recognizes the essential character of the building and enhances it. To look its best the colors must also relate to those of the buildings around it. A brilliant multicolored Victorian house might look out of place in the midst of dark shingle houses, while the same colors in more muted hues with touches of brilliant color could provide the perfect accent for that setting. Light colors of any hue tend to advance and to make the building stand out, especially when the surrounding buildings are neutral or dark. Greys and muted colors can effectively minimize the visual impact of undesirably large elements like garage doors.

## FACADE RESTORATION

The residents of the Inner Richmond Conservation Area are fortunate that very few inappropriate or *misguided improvements* have occurred in their area. Thus, very few owners here will need to face the prospect of total restoration as in other sections of the City. But restoration can vary from the duplication of a single piece of missing ornament to the replacement of the whole facade. Much of the ornament on Craftsman and Mission Revival style buildings could be duplicated by skilled finish carpenters. Victorian and Classic Revival buildings generally employ more elaborate ornament such as turnings, moldings, cast plaster, and scroll work. The recent revival of interest in old buildings has stimulated the formation of services that specialize in coordinating the specialized skills required to restore this type of building. These services are listed in the yellow pages under **MILLWORK**.

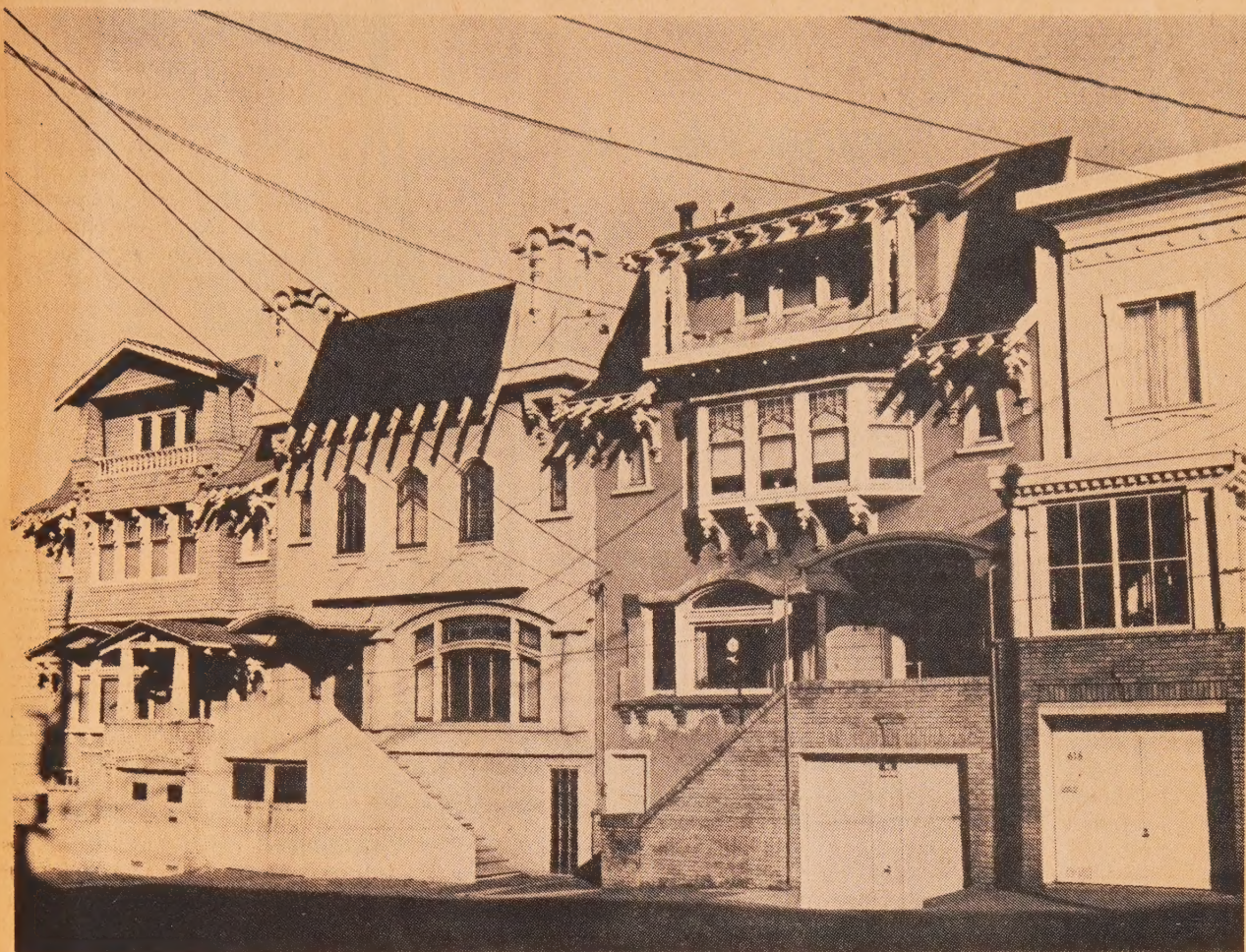


## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Foundation For San Francisco's Architectural Heritage has prepared an excellent guide to restoration. It contains the names of firms providing services in this field, and an extensive bibliography of useful books and publications. *Directory 77* is available at the *Heritage* bookstore, 2007 Franklin Street.







Part of the group at 606-630 Eighth Avenue.

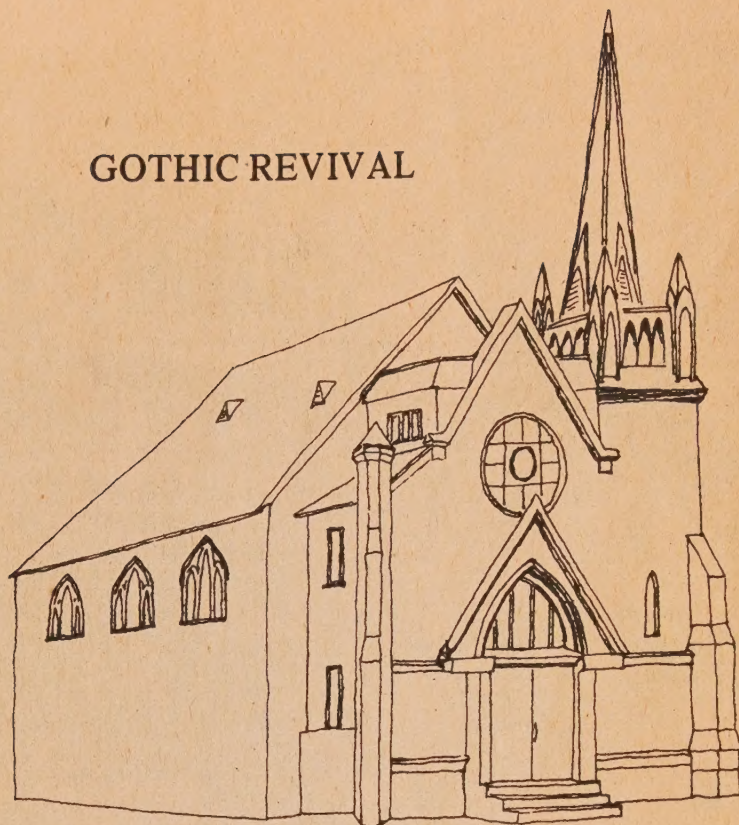
## Appendix of Architectural Styles

*The most rewarding architectural changes respect the original style of the building and the character of its surroundings. For this reason accurate identification of the building's style is an important first step in any proposed alteration.*

*The first group of examples include the "pure" styles. This terminology is fairly standard and examples of these styles occur throughout the Bay Area. On the other hand the "mixed" styles are building types that scarcely appear outside the Richmond or the Sunset. Most of the buildings in the Inner Richmond Conservation Area can be placed in one of these mixed categories.*



## GOTHIC REVIVAL



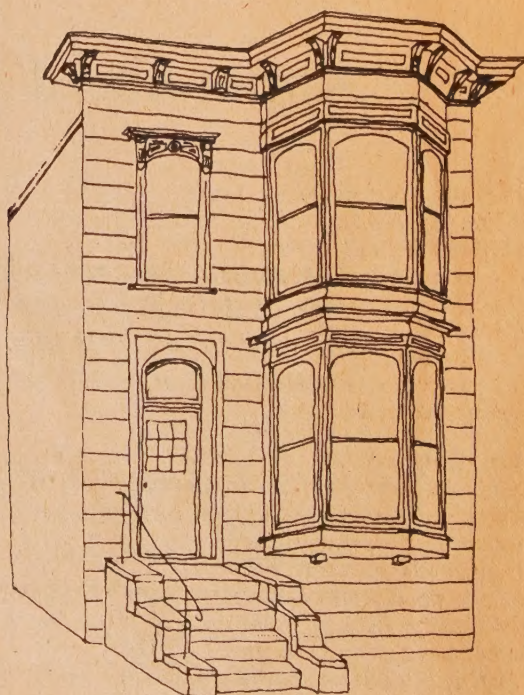
990 Cabrillo

The Gothic Revival in San Francisco was frequently an adaptation in wood of medieval stone forms. Often used for churches and schools, it depended on allusive or-

nament, *pointed* arched windows, lace-like pierced bargeboards and forms such as piers or turrets. This example is covered with wood siding.

## ITALIANATE

This style seldom occurs in the area west of Arguello, but this is the style of many early rowhouses in the older sections of the city. They are generally two stories high, and have a stack of angled bay windows that rises to the top of the facade. Windows are tall with slightly arched tops. The example shown is typical of the style except that the portico — the roof above the entrance — has been removed and replaced by a metal fire escape.



415 Seventh Avenue



## QUEEN ANNE



521-529 Eighth Avenue

Externally these houses often bear little resemblance to the rambling suburban compositions which inspired the name. The trademark of the Queen Anne style, the corner turret, is frequently omitted in the builder rowhouse version, but the treatment of the facade with a variety of surface textures — ornamental woodwork,

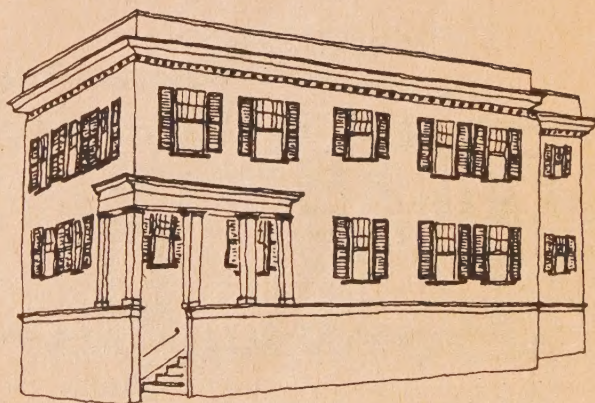
shingles, clapboard, brick, and tile — remains the same. Inside, the plan avoids the long narrow hallways of earlier Victorian houses, and there are frequently built-in storage cabinets, windows of quaint shape, and a generally greater richness of material and color.

---

## COLONIAL REVIVAL

This style really has two distinct phases. First as an offshoot of the Queen Anne, it was a free adaption of the earliest wooden buildings of New England. This version often has very steep roof slopes, and siding of dark clapboard or shingles. The composition is usually asymmetrical. The decorative devices associated with it are swan's neck pediments, drop finials hanging from projecting second story and very small paned windows that are almost medieval in feeling.

By the turn of the century, the Colonial Revival had moved to a more formal version emphasizing lightness and symmetry, and drew its inspiration from eighteenth century American domestic building types. It is composed of plain clapboarded wall surfaces sparingly decorated with wood trim of classical derivation. The characteristic paint color is white or pale grey. This phase is sometimes hard to distinguish from the Classical Revival. But it always emphasizes American design sources and it was rarely applied to any building type other than single family houses.

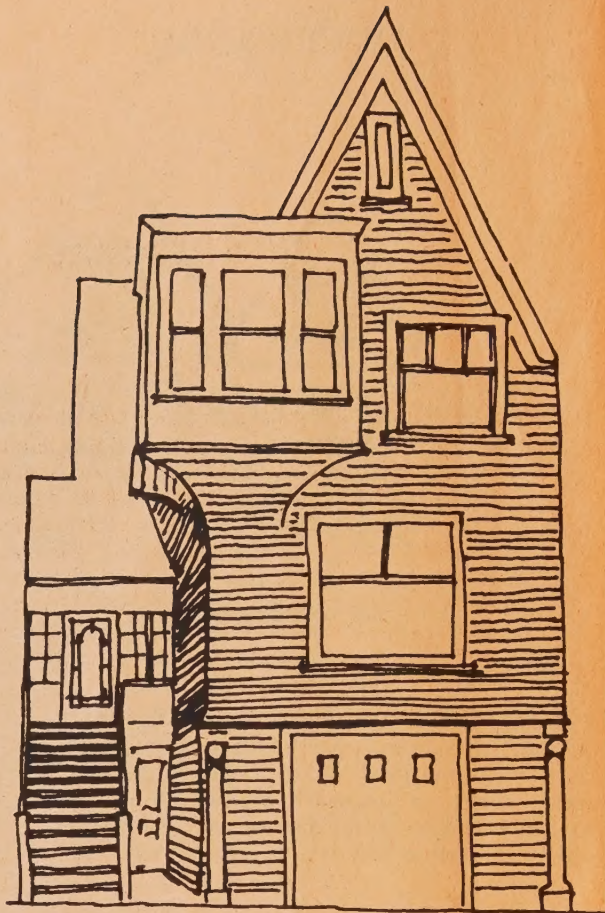


900 Balboa



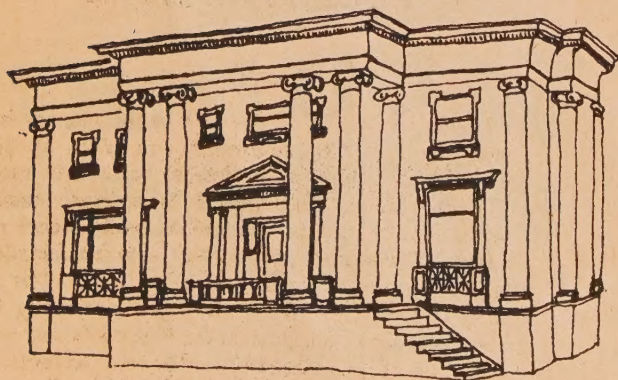
## SHINGLE STYLE

Closely related to the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival Styles, this style is generally associated with a concern for massing and proportion. It uses warped or angled planes and curved surfaces manipulated to display the shingled walls and roof to maximum advantage. The effect is informal and understated.



483 Sixth Avenue

## CLASSICAL REVIVAL



1001 Balboa

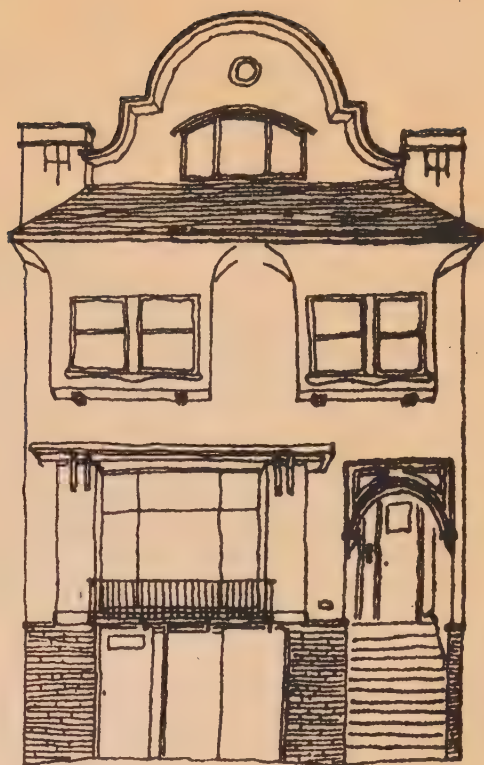
This type is an adaption of the English Palladian style of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The desired effect was a simple, calm, rational symmetry. The basic cubelike volume of the building is enhanced by de-emphasizing the roof. Low pitched roofs were screened from view by parapets or classical balustrades. Large but simple moldings surround door and window openings. The most important opening may be surmounted by a classical pediment. Sometimes the whole facade is treated as a classical temple with columns or pilasters two stories high. The siding is usually narrow boards, occasionally decorated with massive quoins, or wood siding is scored to resemble massive blocks of rusticated stone.

This style was used throughout San Francisco for large private houses, all kinds of public buildings, and most of all, for flats. In this form, the requirements of the single building were modified by the addition of bay windows. Unlike Victorian buildings, which emphasized the transparent quality produced by such large areas of glass, the Classic style attempts to present an image of sturdy solidity. This is achieved by defining windows with wide moldings, thus emphasizing the quality of window as voids in a solid wall, by running bands of molding (stringcourses) across the facade at each floor, and by topping the building with a massive projecting cornice.



## MISSION REVIVAL

As the cities of California grew, there was an increasing interest in the romantic past. The only visible remnant of this past was the Mission architecture of the Franciscans. These modest churches were built of adobe, stuccoed to protect it from the rain. Openings were few and small. Decoration was concentrated around the principal entrance. Generally the roof was of red clay tiles. The buildings that adopted this style incorporated such features as rough stucco, red tile trim, arched openings and a semi-circular arched parapet, either solid or pierced with a Baroque opening.



622 Eighth Avenue



579-81 Seventh Avenue

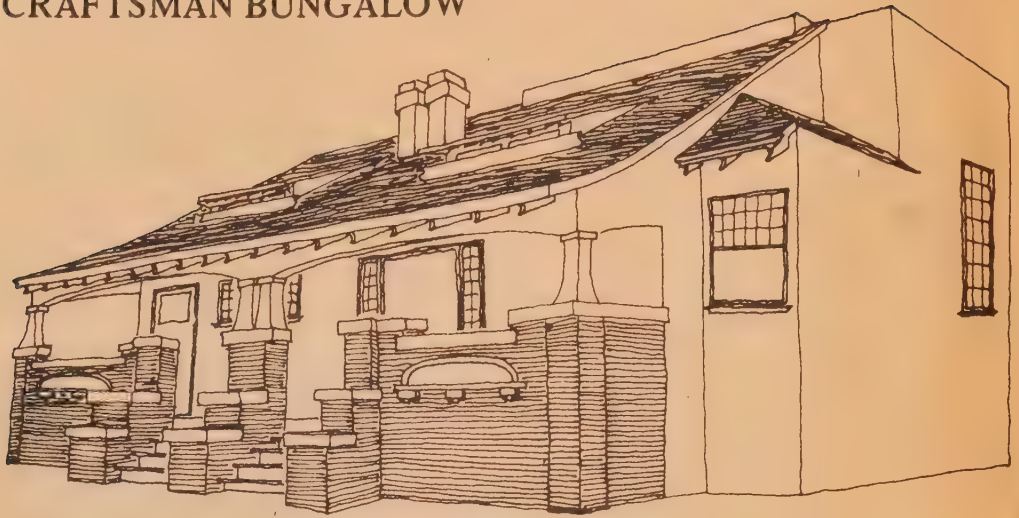


## PUEBLO REVIVAL

Archaeological interest at the turn of the century in the Indian pueblos of the Southwest was taken up by architects who combined the pueblo form with modern building techniques. Buildings in this style are massed as a series of cubes, stacked up and set back at each story. They are always done in stucco or concrete detailed to suggest the massive quality of adobe walls. The mandatory decorative device is the *viga*, projecting beam ends occurring at the floor lines. Flat roofs surrounded by low parapets sometimes form roof terraces. The overall effect of this style is similar to Mission Revival but more rectilinear and more severe.



## CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW



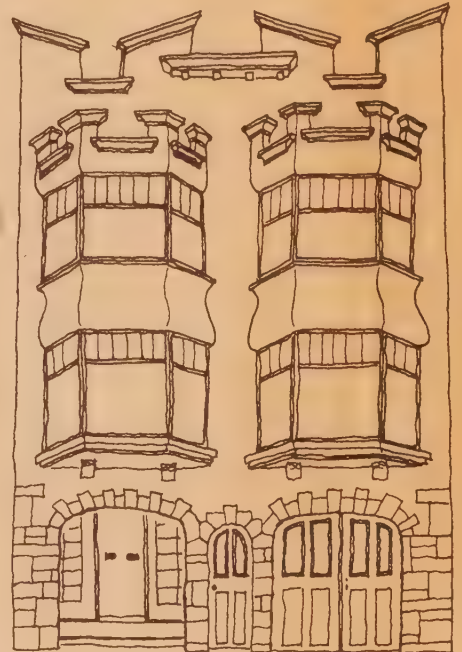
1925-1931 Anza

The distinguishing marks of this style are: low ground-hugging proportions; a prominent low-pitched overhung roof; integration of the building with the landscaping; use of battered foundation walls and chimneys, made of clinker brick or river rock; a recessed front porch with massive piers; and an informal arrangement of the

building and its parts. Dormers are integrated into the overall roof profile. Shingles were the preferred wall covering although stucco was probably used more often. Minor features such as hardware and porch lamps have the substantial handmade appearance of hammered metal.

## SECESSIONIST/ART NOUVEAU

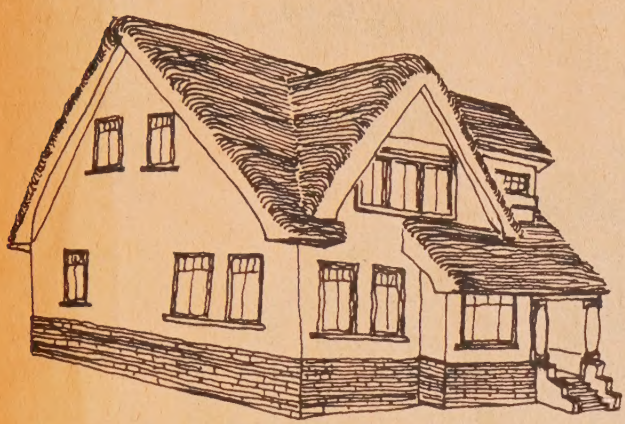
The *Secession* was a group of progressive artist sartists and architects who set up their own school in Vienna about 1897. Their work was similar to the *Art Nouveau* movement of the same period, but it avoided the vegetative forms and recurring lines that were associated with *Art Nouveau* design. Some of the design principles developed by the *Secession* ultimately became very important to the development of modern architecture. As adapted to builder housing in San Francisco, the style represents a more formal and urban expression than its contemporary, the Craftsman style. Secessionism utilizes decorations of molded plaster or stucco which totally transform classical elements such as cornices, moldings, brackets, into abstract modern imagery. A characteristic feature is the frequent use of very flat pointed arches or *eyebrow* form on dormers or porch roofs. Windows often have rounded or radius corners on all sides. The style deemphasizes small elements, fine texture, or any decoration suggesting sentimentality or romanticism.



835 Cabrillo



# ENGLISH COTTAGE STYLE

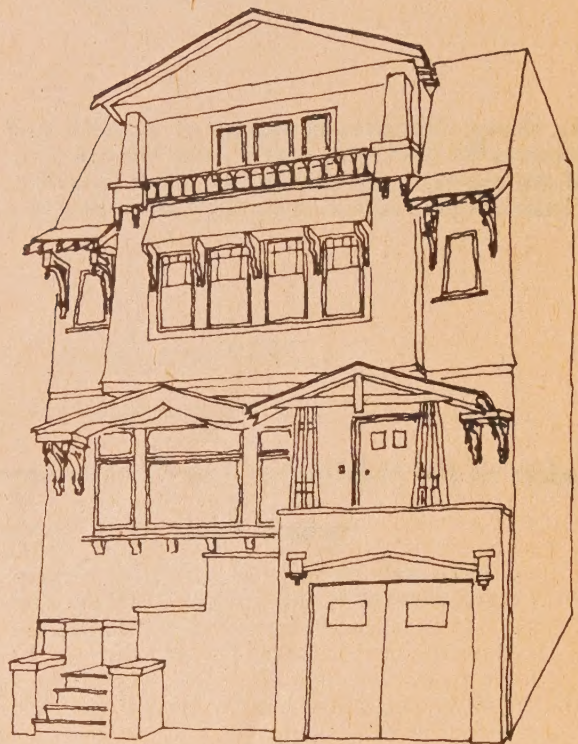


798 Tenth Avenue at Fulton

The roof identifies these romantic adaption of vernacular English cottages. Punctuated with gables and dormers it is covered with wood shingles in irregular wavy patterns. The shingles roll over at the eaves in a way that suggests thatch. Windows of varying sizes are scattered according to the requirements of the interior. Exterior walls are sometimes marked to suggest half-timbering. The overall effect of this style is informal.

# CRAFTSMAN ROWHOUSE

This is the most common style of building in the area, combining elements of most of the styles current at the time it was developed. The interior arrangement resembles the Queen Anne rowhouse plan, but the appearance of the facade is quite different. The style is also called the *vertical bungalow* because it has most of the decorative features of the Craftsman Bungalow without being low to the ground. These houses are two to three stories high. Features such as: low-pitched projected roof and rafters, wood porch columns, shingles or stucco or both in combination, kneebraces below bay windows, and built-in window boxes are all drawn from the bungalow idiom. Windows grouped together, and zig-zag entrance steps combined with stepdown retaining walls follow *Prairie School* design principles. Stucco walls, clay tile accents, and projecting beam ends are devices drawn from Mission Revival, Pueblo, or Secessionist styles. Even French and Classical shapes are sometimes used in door and window openings.



606 Eighth Avenue



# EXAMPLES OF MIXED STYLES

MISSION/  
CLASSICAL/  
CRAFTSMAN



484-490 Ninth Avenue

**An unusual and handsome example of combined style occurs at 484-490 Ninth Avenue at Anza. The basic form of this building is the same as that of the Edwardian Classic post-fire flats that are the dominant building type**

**on Nob Hill and Russian Hill, but the sheath of shingles and clinker brick suggest the Craftsman Bungalow style. A parapet wall of Mission Revival arches replaces the conventional heavy cornice.**

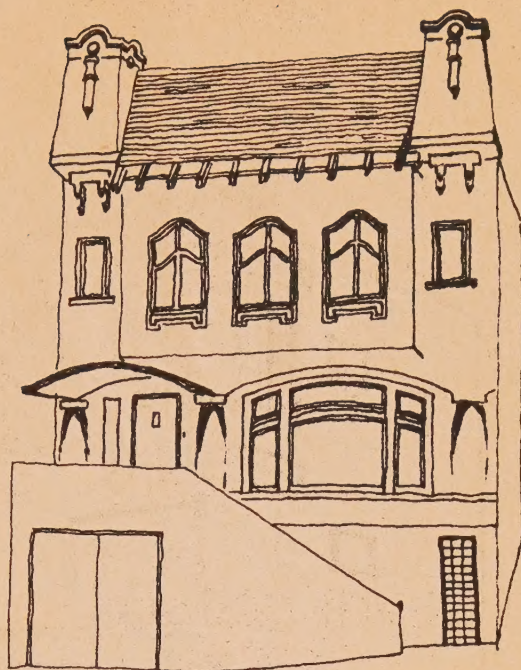
***Most of the buildings in the Conservation Area are delightful architectural mixtures rather than pure specimens of a recognized style.***



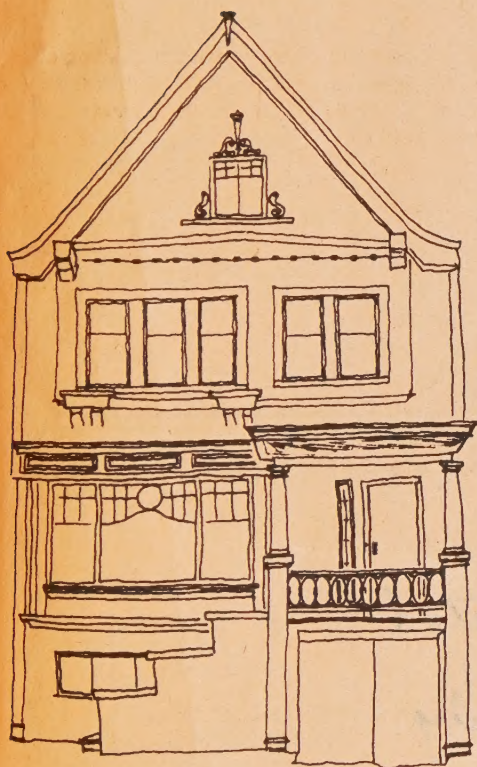


## SECESSIONIST/ MISSION REVIVAL

A bold and articulated collection of Mission Revival and Secessionist decoration adorns this vertical bungalow, one of several fine buildings in a group on Eighth Avenue. Here on number 610 tiny Mission Revival arches decorate the tops of Secessionist piers rising above the roof, and French influence can be seen in the curved window muntins. Engaged piers suggesting Mission styling flank the main floor windows.



610 Eighth Avenue

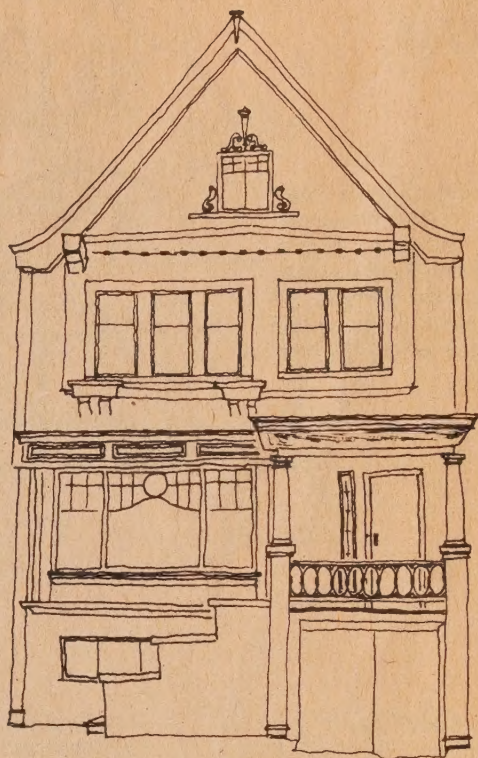


707 Tenth Avenue

## QUEEN ANNE/ COLONIAL REVIVAL

Colonial Revival combined with the Queen Anne style produced this homespun version of early Americana, one of the most delightful houses in the Richmond.





DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING 100 LARKIN STREET SAN FRANCISCO CA 94102

Jack Leisler  
Institute of Governmental  
Studies  
University of Calif. Berkeley  
Moses Hall bldg 109

94720

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 11565  
SAN FRANCISCO CA